

LISTING OF CLAIM AMENDMENTS

This listing of the claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Cancelled)
3. (Cancelled)
4. (Cancelled)
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Cancelled)
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Cancelled)
10. (Cancelled)
11. (Cancelled)
12. (Cancelled)
13. (Cancelled)
14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) An apparatus for providing electronically mailable call credits, comprising:

an application server adapted to be connected to a data network;

a memory associated with the application server for storing information in a database;

programmed instructions on the application server for accepting from a customer a purchase order of a specified purchase value of call credits via the data network;

programmed instructions on the application server for issuing an electronic call certificate for the value of the call credits purchased;

programmed instructions on the application server for storing information related to the electronic call certificate in the database; and

programmed instructions for sending a copy of the electronic call certificate via email to a recipient designated by the customer, the electronic call certificate including at least the value of the call credits purchased and a unique identifier for retrieving the stored information related to the electronic call certificate.

20. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 19 wherein the application server comprises programmed instructions for encrypting and decrypting at least part of the messages sent and received.

21. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 19 wherein the programmed instructions for accepting the purchase order are adapted to accept a payment from the customer for the purchase order by one of a credit card, debit card and calling card.
22. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 21 wherein the programmed instructions for accepting the purchase order are adapted to communicate via the data network with a financial institution which issued the credit card, debit card or calling card to obtain an authorization for the purchase order.
23. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 19 further comprising a call control node adapted to communicate with the application server and to communicate with switching nodes in a switched telephone network.
24. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 23 wherein the call control node is a virtual switching point adapted to function as a node in a common channel signaling network and further adapted to formulate and send common channel signaling messages to control a call connection between the recipient and the called party.
25. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 24 wherein the call control node comprises:
 - a common channel signaling interface for sending and receiving common channel signaling messages;
 - programmed instructions for examining common channel signaling messages and transparently passing selected common channel signaling messages to an adjacent signaling node;

programmed instructions for formulating common channel signaling messages in response to predetermined criteria;
a data network interface for sending and receiving data messages; and
programmed instructions for tracking individual call sessions virtually switched therethrough.

26. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 25 wherein the call control node is adapted to report a duration of a call associated with the unique identifier to the computer application server.

27. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 26 wherein the application server comprises programmed instructions for calculating a charge for a call session.

28. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 27 wherein the application server comprises programmed instructions for deducting a charge for a call connection from a stored remaining value of call credits associated with an electronic call certificate.

29. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 25 wherein the call control node is adapted to receive from the application server information respecting a maximum call duration and is further adapted to terminate the call connection when the maximum call duration has expired.

30. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 23 wherein the call control node further comprises:

a memory for storing at least one of the common channel signaling messages; and

a memory for storing messages received from and to be sent via the data network to the application server.

31. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 23 wherein the call control node further comprises programmed instructions for encrypting and decrypting messages sent to and received from the application server.
32. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 19 wherein the application server has access to a database of designs which are displayed on demand to the customer, the customer being enabled to create a message or a greeting card into which the electronic certificate is incorporated.